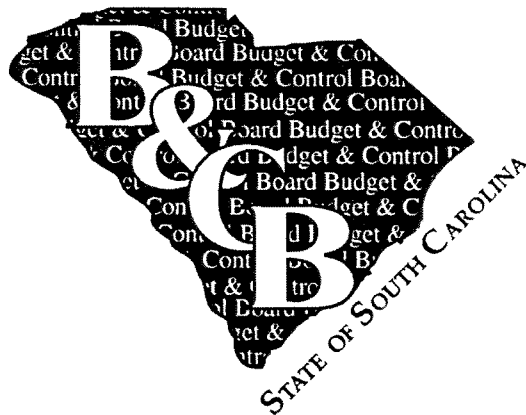


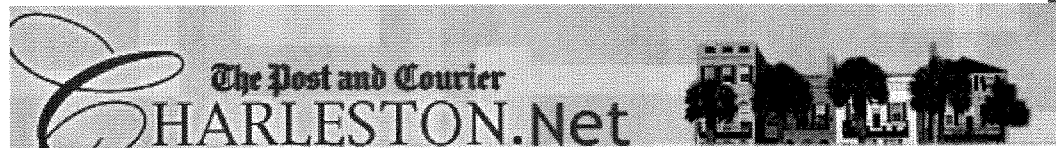
June 1, 2004

State Government News Summary



**Prepared by the Budget and Control Board
Office of the Executive Director**

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STATE/REGION The Post and Courier



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Story last updated at 6:59 a.m. Tuesday, June 1, 2004

Crime-puncher Condon takes swing at spending

BY SCHUYLER KROPP
Of The Post and Courier Staff

COLUMBIA--Charlie Condon is hitting his stride in front of an audience of 1,100 GOP activists at the South Carolina Republican Party Convention.

Spending in Washington has run amok, he tells them, his voice echoing against the concrete floor of a former college basketball arena.

Even the Republican-controlled U.S. Senate -- the club Condon hopes to join -- is partly to blame, Condon says, arguing that the federal government has grown more in the past five years than it did in the previous 50.

"Republicans are acting like Democrats with out-of-control wasteful government spending," Condon bellows. For proof, he picks out the \$50 million allocated to build an indoor rain forest in Iowa and the \$90,000 set aside for the Cowgirl Hall of Fame in Texas.

Then, positioning himself as the champion of his applauding audience, Condon tells the group that with him in office, things will be different.

In the U.S. Senate race, Condon is trying to win back Republicans who readily voted for him twice as South Carolina's law-and-order attorney general but didn't back him in his 2002 gubernatorial bid.

Today, with Democratic Sen. Fritz Hollings retiring, Condon contends that the U.S. Senate is where he wanted to be all along. In 2002, he said, he pondered trying to succeed the late Republican Sen. Strom Thurmond before launching his



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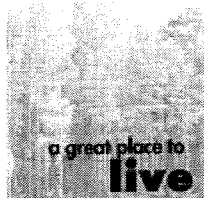
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unsuccessful campaign for governor.

Even after that defeat, Condon never lost his zeal for public service. He immediately began planning for a Senate campaign. That's why his interim career choice might be perplexing to some.

Condon became legal counsel and senior vice president for Palmetto Surety Corporation in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina's only in-state underwriter of bail bonds for accused court defendants.

As chief counsel for the firm, Condon's job is far removed from the courtroom. He has never dealt directly with the accused or the bail bondsmen who organize their release. Most of his duties involve advising the company on the myriad of regulations that govern insurance in South Carolina.

Condon said the job is consistent with his political philosophy and tough stance against crime, adding that many people have misconceptions about the bail-bond business. First and foremost, he said, it's a key component to the doctrine of innocent until proven guilty.

"I take a back seat to no one in the entire state of South Carolina in being tough on crime. I think my record shows that," Condon said. "The right to bail, which is in the U.S. Constitution, should not be taken away. That's a precious constitutional right."

Legal scholars see nothing inconsistent about Condon's job choice.

"The fact that he was attorney general doesn't always put him on the side of the sheriff," said University of South Carolina law professor Eldon Wedlock. "I don't really see an ethical conflict."

Condon long has been a political activist and a classroom achiever. Born in Charleston, he graduated from Bishop England High School and attended the University of Notre Dame before earning his law degree from Duke University.

His political career started in Charleston in 1980 when he was elected the Democratic solicitor for the 9th Judicial Circuit. He was 27, the youngest solicitor ever elected in the state. Nine years later, he joined the Republican Party.

After 14 years as solicitor, Condon ran for attorney general, winning two statewide races and becoming one of the state's most recognizable Republicans. Among his accomplishments were pushing for the abolishment of parole for violent offenders and a ban on plea bargains for repeat violent offenders, and supporting a victims' bill of rights, all of which he says contributed to a drop in the state's crime rates in the 1990s.

While in office, Condon was never shy about his aggressive views on criminal prosecution, something that played into his reputation as a political street-fighter and boosted his persona as an ultra-conservative law enforcer.

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He suggested that accused child-killer Susan Smith plead guilty to save the cost of a trial. He also proposed, infamously, an "electric sofa" to speed up executions, and he endorsed a civilian "open season" to shoot home invaders.

He took on the NAACP, suing the organization to stop its border protests of the Confederate battle flag, which Condon opposed moving from the Capitol dome. The boycott, he said, harms state businesses that have no say over the flag issue. Condon also was a quick dissenter when rival Senate candidate and former Gov. David Beasley called for removing the flag.

One of his more famous legal crusades came in 1989, when he was solicitor. He launched a program to force cocaine-addicted pregnant women at the Medical University of South Carolina to get treatment or face jail time. His rationale was that taking cocaine during pregnancy is a form of child abuse.

His effort led to a lawsuit by the women who said their privacy was violated. MUSC eventually gave up the testing, and the women won their lawsuit. The legal fight goes on as the sides try to work out a financial settlement for the women.

As a Senate candidate, Condon sees his two decades of experience in prosecution as an asset that sets him apart from the five other Republicans seeking their party's nomination. He said U.S. policy for the war on terrorism is being directed by the U.S. Senate and probably will be for the next 10 to 20 years.

In tandem with his message against terrorism, Condon said Washington needs more voices protesting rampant spending.

"It's almost like Nero fiddling while Rome burns," he said of the Washington mindset. "It's unbelievable how irresponsible the Congress is being. Fiscal conservatism, which I think Republicans really expected, is gone. There's no thought of balancing the books in Washington."

CHARLIE CONDON

AGE: 51

RESIDENCE: Sullivan's Island

FAMILY: Wife, Emily; four children, Charles Jr., Patrick, Doreen, Elliot

EDUCATION: University of Notre Dame, Duke University Law School

PHONE NUMBER/E-MAIL ADDRESS: (843) 884-8146/info@condonforsenate.com

OCCUPATION: attorney

POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: S.C. Attorney General, 1994-2002; Charleston County 9th Circuit Solicitor 1981-92

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Posted on Tue, Jun. 01, 2004

GOP Senate race costliest ever

New technology, television ads mean candidates need millions to campaign

By AARON GOULD SHEININ
Staff Writer

The four top candidates in the Republican U.S. Senate race had raised more than \$8 million through May 19, easily making their June 8 contest the most expensive primary in S.C. history.

And the money is flowing back out just as quickly: The six candidates have spent \$6.78 million.

Where does the money go?

Former Gov. David Beasley spent \$425 on liability insurance during the first three months of this year. U.S. Rep. Jim DeMint dropped \$8,000 at the post office during the same time. And former Attorney General Charlie Condon spent \$9,000 on a computer system and then another \$1,600 on computer repairs.

Welcome to the world of high-stakes, high-finance political campaigns.

While television advertising remains the single largest expense of most of the campaigns, rising costs in other areas are contributing to the growing price of doing business.

And the campaigns are multimillion-dollar businesses.

"It's pretty much a small business with a sales goal, and the sales goal is to win," said DeMint, the Greenville congressman who had raised \$2.61 million and spent more than \$2.08 million through May 19.

DeMint's money has gone to small expenses, such as \$203.24 for conference calls, as well as big price-tag items. More accurately, much of the money has gone to big price-tag people.

DeMint paid political consultant Warren Tompkins \$20,000 from Jan. 1 to March 31; \$21,000 to Carla Eudy of Washington, an experienced solicitor of contributions from political action committees; and more than \$85,000 to Scott Howell of Dallas, his advertising producer.

DeMint is not alone in spreading campaign cash to consultants.

Former Gov. Beasley, who did not join the race officially until February, paid Columbia political consultant Richard Quinn & Associates \$25,000 and fund-raising consultant Smoak and Co. more than \$6,000 through March 31.

The company that has made the most money in 2004 from a South Carolina candidate is Red Sea LLC, the Virginia company developing Condon's TV campaign. (Red Sea also does advertising for Gov. Mark Sanford.)

Condon's campaign spent more than \$200,000 from Jan. 1 to March 31 with Red Sea for research, strategy and advertising.

The amount of money in the campaigns is "frightening," Condon said, adding he is at a loss as to what to do about it. "I have no solutions, hear me."

Condon, who had raised \$1.32 million in his Senate bid, blames the cost of television ads.

A recent 30-second ad on WIS during the 7 p.m. news cost \$1,750, for example.

"It used to be that the idea of raising \$1 million in a statewide race was considered a very enormous campaign," he said.

"That's bothersome."

costly technology

But it is unlikely to get better, said Don Fowler of Columbia, a former chairman of the Democratic National Committee, political scientist and historian.

Fowler said costs are being driven up, in part, by the proliferation of consultants and the emergence of new technology.

"The technology of campaigning expands with almost every generation of new innovations in telecommunications and the Internet," Fowler said. "There are so many more things you can do now."

Consultants learn and master the technology and "urge it on the candidates," he said.

An example is the use of hand-held devices called Blackberries. These palm-size machines can transmit data from the field to a central computer. Campaigns send college-age workers out into targeted neighborhoods to survey residents to identify issues and political leanings.

That information immediately is dispatched to a central database, and, depending on the results, targeted mailings are sent to each household.

This method was successfully used by Republicans in the Mississippi and Georgia gubernatorial elections in recent years, Fowler said.

"It increases the favorable turnout," he said, "I won't say exponentially, but certainly by large percentages."

Fowler predicts the November general election campaign will be the most expensive in state history. The eventual Republican senatorial nominee alone will spend between \$10 million and \$15 million, he said. Inez Tenenbaum, the presumptive Democratic nominee, will need to raise and spend \$7 million or \$8 million to compete.

Tenenbaum's money goal is lower, in part because the Democratic primary is not as competitive. She faces perennial candidate Ben Frasier of Wadmalaw Island on June 8.

the new wrinkle

University of Virginia political scientist Larry Sabato said the rising costs are another sign S.C. campaigns are joining a national trend.

"The same phenomenon is occurring everywhere," he said. "We used to think there was a green-glass-colored ceiling for campaign spending, but we're starting to learn the sky is the limit."

In the 1980s, Sabato said, rising campaign costs were purely television-driven as TV ad costs increased at four times the consumer price index. "It still continues to go up, but there has to be another reason."

A new wrinkle this year contributing to the increased costs is candidate Thomas Ravenel. The Charleston businessman, who has reported assets of up to \$164 million, has put \$2.25 million of his own money into the campaign.

Under new federal campaign rules, that triggers what's known as the "millionaire's amendment." In normal situations, candidates can accept up to \$2,000 from each donor. But once a candidate like Ravenel starts pouring his own money into his campaign, the "amendment" allows his opponents to increase contribution limits from individuals.

Now, because of Ravenel, the other five Republicans in the race can accept up to \$12,000 from an individual.

"The more he spends, the wider the limits go," Sabato said.

Reach Gould Sheinin at (803) 771-8658 or asheinin@thestate.com.

BRINGING IN THE GREEN

The six GOP candidates for South Carolina's U.S. Senate seat raised more than \$8 million and spent more than \$6.5 million through May 19.

David Beasley

Raised: \$1.56 million

Spent: \$979,179

Highlights*: Spent \$1,850 with BellSouth; \$15,506 with Carolina Bank of Darlington, where he is an officer

Charlie Condon

Raised: \$1.49 million

Spent: \$1.05 million

Highlights: Spent \$825 on Web site design; \$4,529 on targeted mailing

Orly Benny Davis

Raised**: \$62,959, all loans from herself

Spent: \$61,769

Highlights: Almost all spending on travel costs and filing fees

Jim DeMint

Raised: \$2.61 million

Spent: \$2.08 million

Highlights: Spent \$888 with Alltel for cell phones; \$203 for conference calls

Mark McBride

Raised: \$187,796

Spent: \$145,180

Highlights: Spent \$48,000 on billboard advertising

Thomas Ravenel

Raised: \$2.57 million

Spent: \$2.47 million

Highlights: Spent \$31,000 on salaries for 10 employees

* All "highlights" for all candidates through March 31

** All sums for Davis through March 31

SOURCES: Documents filed with Secretary of the Senate



Posted on Tue, Jun. 01, 2004

Senior services may lose funding

Unless S.C. follows federal bidding laws, government might cut millions to state programs

By JENNIFER TALHELM
Staff Writer

Corine Scott can't wait to get on the van in the morning to see her best friends at the Denny Terrace senior center in northwest Columbia.

Every weekday, the 83-year-old widow and 30 other seniors get together to bend and stretch in exercise classes, crochet ornaments for the nursing home, eat a hot meal — with dessert — and pray.

Scott says it keeps her feeling young and healthy.

"When you sit at home, you feel lonesome," she said. "Everybody in here, we're loving together. We look out for each other."

Senior programs such as the one that helps keep Scott independent and out of a nursing home face either a blip or a radical change in the next year.

For most of the 30 years South Carolina has received federal dollars for Meals on Wheels and other senior programs, the state has been breaking a federal law that requires vendors to bid competitively for the work.

By 2005, state and local senior service providers will move to a competitive system, potentially squeezing some out of their jobs.

If the state does not comply, the federal government could cut the money it sends to South Carolina. That means the state could lose more than half of its \$26 million budget for in-home meals, nursing and other services.

Meanwhile, the state office overseeing aging programs is about to move from the Department of Health and Human Services to Lt. Gov. Andre Bauer's office.

State officials say they are confident any changes will be smooth enough that seniors will not notice the difference.

But others are apprehensive. Doug Wright, a local service provider in Anderson and Oconee counties, worries that transportation, nursing, in-home meals and other services will be split.

"If we're going to split each individual piece," he said, "then it will fragment the process."

Competitive bidding laws ensure government money is spent efficiently so no one company or nonprofit gets a sweetheart deal.

South Carolina has not followed the law for decades mostly because it is a rural state with few groups able to compete to provide services.

But the state's senior population has ballooned recently — and is expected to keep growing — and there is a growing number of groups asking to get in the game.

Federal officials overseeing the money South Carolina gets under the federal Older Americans Act say the state needs to make sure its seniors get the best services for the money.

"The bottom line is that they have to have an open system," said Percy Devine, a bi-regional administrator for the

federal Administration on Aging.

During the decades, the state built a unique network of county-level councils on aging to run senior centers and services. The councils dictated the services provided and, to an extent, how much would be spent.

But that is the opposite of how it should work, said Devine, who during a visit about a year and a half ago discovered South Carolina was breaking federal law.

Devine told state officials they must decide what services are needed and then ask for bids.

As far as he and state officials can tell, South Carolina is the only state in the nation with such a system.

During the past year and a half, state and local groups have worked with seniors, their families and other interested groups to talk about how to make a smooth transition.

Sue Scally, the recently retired chief of the state Bureau of Senior Services, said most councils on aging would prevail in their bids since they have decades of experience.

"There's a lot of fear about the process," Scally said. "But we don't anticipate there's going to be a lot of change in services."

Some county providers are nervous. Others say the change is for the best.

"Procurement will get people to improve their quality or get out of the game," said Ray Fontaine, executive director of the Horry County Council on Aging.

He said aging services must evolve with the need — more seniors are active and healthy now.

"It's not just a rocking chair and a hot meal anymore," he said.

Reach Talhelm at (803) 771-8339 or jtalhelm@thestate.com.



Posted on Tue, Jun. 01, 2004

Gallery owner criticizes arts group

CityArt president accuses S.C. Arts Commission of stealing business

By JEFFREY DAY
Staff Writer

A Columbia art gallery has accused the S.C. Arts Commission of stealing business from commercial galleries by helping a law firm choose art for a new building.

But the arts commission says it is doing exactly what it was created to do. And it strongly denies the implication that one of its employees was paid by the law firm.

Wendyth Wells, president of CityArt gallery in the Vista, and three employees made the accusation in a letter to Gov. Mark Sanford in April. They said the arts commission and its longtime visual arts coordinator, Harriett Green, were "acting in direct competition with the private sector ... in providing art for a nongovernmental entity."

According to Wells, CityArt had helped the Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough law firm create an art collection for its new home in the 15-story Meridian Building on Main Street in Columbia.

Later, the law firm went to the arts commission for assistance.

"My tax dollars are paying (the arts commission's) salaries" while it is undercutting her business, Wells said in an interview.

In stating Green worked as a "private contractor" for the law firm while employed by the arts commission, the letter also appears to imply she was being paid by Nelson Mullins.

Ken May, deputy director of the Arts Commission, countered that it is not in competition with CityArt or any other commercial gallery. The commission is not being paid by Nelson Mullins, he said.

The arts commission will help the law firm identify important South Carolina artists who should be part of a significant collection. If those artists are represented by CityArt or any other private gallery, the firm will be steered toward those galleries.

"We're not selling art," May said. "We are creating a process whereby business can get art, and we can help generate sales by artists. We don't want to go into the gallery business and don't have any intention of competing with private business.

"We've never solicited this kind of work."

The arts commission helped the Marriott Hotel in Spartanburg choose art last year. For several years in the 1990s, it organized exhibitions for the lobby of the Bank of America (formerly NationsBank) Plaza on Main Street. Neither the arts commission nor its employees were paid for those services.

Nelson Mullins has not decided when it will start buying art for its collection or how much it will spend, but the purchases will be made over several years.

"The beauty of working with the arts commission is that they provide a high level of knowledge in one place," said Kevin Hall, an attorney with the firm.

CityArt's objection "hasn't slowed us down," he said.

"We plan to work with many people including CityArt," Hall said. "We're fans of CityArt and have great regard for them."

'IT'S ALMOST SLANDER'

CityArt sent copies of its letter to other galleries around the state.

"The letter made it sound like (Green) was double dipping," said Ginny Newell, who owns an art restoration business and used to own a gallery in Columbia. "As long as she's not getting paid, it makes sense for them to use her. Harriett knows what's going on in art around the state. What she says holds a lot of weight."

Katie Lee, director of the Eva Carter Gallery in Charleston, had a stronger reaction.

"I thought it was quite wrong for (CityArt) to send this letter," she said. "It's almost slander. It is (Green's) reputation on the line from that letter."

Suzette Surkamer, arts commission director, responded to Wells' letter to the governor with her own. She wrote that the agency's mission is "to develop a thriving arts environment" and that doing such advisory work is part of the job.

State arts councils and commissions serve businesses in myriad ways and there are no set models, said Jonathan Katz, director of the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, a Washington, D.C., organization that works with arts councils.

Kim Craine, former communications director for that group and now on the staff of the President's Committee for the Arts and Humanities, said the connection between public agencies and the private sector is growing.

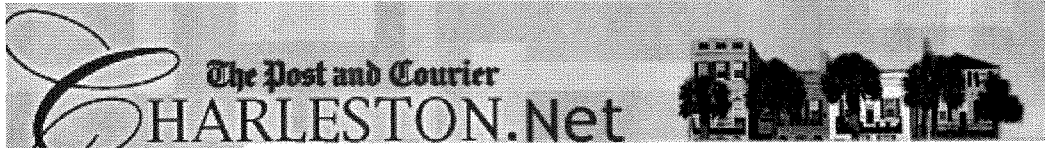
"Everyone is looking at this as part of the creative economy," she said.

The Kentucky Arts Council is promoting a program to place works by Kentucky artists in retail spaces, not just galleries. The council also promotes performing arts groups to corporations to hire for events.

"If it means economic development for the arts, we're there," said Ed Lawrence, communication director for the Kentucky Arts Council.

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Story last updated at 6:59 a.m. Tuesday, June 1, 2004

Sunken marker may be key to state line remap

Associated Press

LAKE WYLIE--A stone monument sunk decades ago by the creation of Lake Wylie may hold the key to exactly where part of the South Carolina-North Carolina state line is located.

The only problem is no one can find the 3-foot-tall stone obelisk erected in 1815.

For the past 10 years, a group called the North Carolina-South Carolina Boundary Commission has been using modern technology to redraw the 401-mile border between the Carolinas.

Remapping the state line is expected to take another 10 years. Surveyors started in the mountains in the west and are moving toward the sea.

The effort started after Duke Energy Corp. asked for a survey that would hold up legally as it prepared to sell and donate land in the Jocassee Gorges area of Upstate South Carolina.

It's a tedious task because when the boundary was drawn in 1813, surveyors used trees, rivers and mountain ridges as guides. That gave them accuracy to within a few dozen feet. Today's satellite technology can cut that margin of error down significantly. But surveyors have to find the marks used by the original mapmakers.

That's why the stone marker under Lake Wylie is so important. Its precise location could alter a 65-mile stretch of the state line that runs west from Lake Wylie through six counties to just south of Tryon, N.C.

The stone was placed at the confluence of the South Fork and Catawba rivers. The last recorded sighting was a newspaper



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article in 1923 -- two years before the Catawba River was dammed for a second time and Lake Wylie was created.

A team of surveyors will return to the lake this week with a boat equipped with underwater mapping equipment.

But Roger Barnes, state surveyor for North Carolina's county and state boundaries, believes the Boundary Commission has about run out of options on locating the marker.

He said if it can't be found, surveyors will have to change plans.

"We've got fixed points along that 65-mile line between Wylie and Tryon," Barnes said. "We've been able to determine where the rivers met. Some places are silted over so we'll just have to make our best estimate of where it is."

And then the two state will just have to come together and agree where the border is like they did after the survey nearly 200 years ago, Barnes said.

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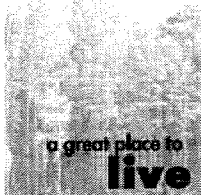
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Posted on Tue, Jun. 01, 2004

The State

House can make roads safer with minibottle vote

IT'S NOT OFTEN that you find such a diverse group as bars and restaurants, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, police and much of the state's medical and business community supporting the same initiative. But they all have concluded that their sometimes-conflicting goals and their extremely different priorities would be served by a measure that faces a final, critical vote in the General Assembly as early as today.

That legislation is the first step toward repealing South Carolina's minibottle law, which forces bars and restaurants to sell drinks that are at least 40 percent stronger than in the rest of the country — and, in the case of some mixed drinks, more than twice as strong.

This state mandate for stiff drinks kills, pure and simple. Obviously tourists are unprepared for what hits them when they buy a drink. But the extra alcohol sneaks up on lifelong South Carolinians as well. Little wonder, then, that our state leads the nation in the rate of alcohol-related highway deaths.

That's why changing the constitution to allow bars and restaurants to sell liquor out of regular-sized bottles — and thus use a more reasonable amount of alcohol in each drink — is a priority for MADD, alcohol and drug abuse agencies and the S.C. Highway Safety Coalition, which is a Who's Who of police agencies, insurance companies and doctors' organizations.

Other problems with minibottles brought the tourism and hospitality industries and chambers of commerce around the state into the fight. The mandate for more alcohol also means more expensive drinks. S.C. businesses can't carry as many different brands of liquor as those in other states, because variety is more expensive with the small bottles. The minibottles can't be recycled. And many tourists see minibottles as just another example of how backward our state is.

In fact, about the only people who want to keep the minibottles are the people with a vested interest in them — the liquor distributors who sell them. The arguments of the distributors and their allies in the Legislature range from spurious to misleading.

They say the minibottle is the only thing standing between customers and watered-down drinks — as if it's the job of the government to guarantee a stiff drink.

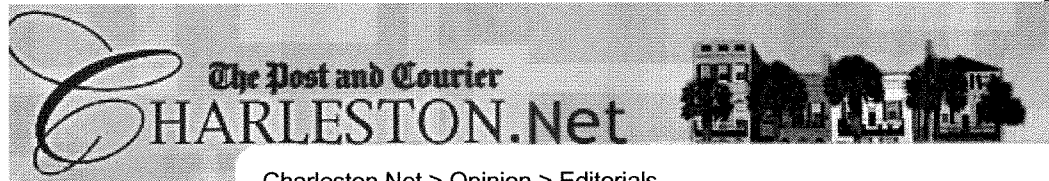
They say the state will lose money by abandoning a system that makes tax collections easy — offering up their own self-interested study in place of the projections of the state's chief economist, who said one proposal would actually increase tax collections slightly. And that was before the Senate came up with another tax method designed by legislators who were worried the original method wouldn't bring in enough money.

But as off-base as the arguments are, they still could carry the day. Last week, the House fell 11 votes short of the two-thirds needed to put the measure on the November ballot. That was surprising, since the House had earlier approved an identical measure (which is stuck in the Senate) with eight votes to spare.

Representatives will try again this week to muster those extra votes, perhaps this time with the active assistance of such longtime advocates as House Speaker David Wilkins and Richland Rep. Bill Cotty and the support of all the legislation's sponsors.

Lawmakers don't have a lot to show for this year's session. This legislation is something they could brag about. More importantly, it's something that could save a lot of needless deaths. No legislator who fails to vote for this measure can claim to care about reducing our highway death rate.

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EDITORIALS The Post and Courier



Story last updated at 6:58 a.m. Tuesday, June 1, 2004

Don't give up on school choice

The failure of the General Assembly to pass the "Put Parents in Charge Act" this year need not be a permanent setback as the tide of school choice continues to rise in this state and across the nation. Lawmakers should give that innovative proposal from Gov. Mark Sanford another chance next year.

The plan introduced in this legislative session would have provided up to \$4,600 in income- or property-tax credits for qualifying families, and for businesses or individuals that contribute to scholarship funds, to offset the costs of private-school tuition or home schooling. House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Bobby Harrell, R-Charleston, though not opposed to the bill's general approach, recently told us that he questioned both the wisdom of having the state grant property-tax credits that could adversely affect local government revenue, and the limited benefits of tax credits for those who pay little or no taxes.

Rep. Harrell said those obstacles might eventually be overcome, but that time constraints precluded the bill's passage in this session. He explained: "The main problem this year was that the bill was introduced so late and requires more research. I believe that is an issue that needs to be thoroughly debated."

Such debate is warranted -- early in next year's session. However, the repeated charge by the bill's opponents, including the S.C. Department of Education, that the governor's proposal lacks accountability fails the logic test. That charge is based upon the fact that private schools are not subject to the same government oversights imposed on public schools.

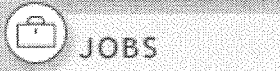
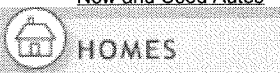
Yet private schools meet significant accountability standards of their own by having to satisfy their customers -- their students' parents -- in the education marketplace. And granting tax credits that facilitate competition in that marketplace would place renewed focus on failing schools -- and give more children a chance to attend successful schools.



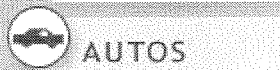
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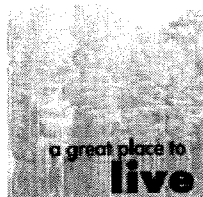
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Another major argument against the bill was that it would deprive public schools of funding. Bill Gillespie, chief economist for the state Board of Economic Advisors, estimated that the bill would reduce state revenue by \$32 million in 2005-06, the first year of its five-year phase-in format, and \$234.4 million by 2009-10.

Yet a study by a Clemson economics professor Cotton Lindsay projected that the state would save \$594 million over that five-year period due to the reduction in students in public schools. And Barbara Nielsen, former state superintendent of education and an adviser to Gov. Sanford, insisted that the governor's proposal contained safeguards assuring no net loss of per-pupil public-school funding.

Rep. Harrell told us the fiscal impact of the plan was probably "in between" those opposing extremes. He added: "I like the general idea of doing the tax credits" to foster school choice.

That general idea already helps college students who use state tuition grants to attend private and church-affiliated colleges in the state. Using state tax credits to help younger students attend private schools is also a sound concept.

And South Carolina voters apparently backed the notion of fostering school choice, including the choice of private schools, in 2002 when they elected as governor Mr. Sanford, who made this issue a strong plank of his campaign platform. The General Assembly should keep that public support of school choice in mind, and give this proposal a fresh look next year.

OPINION



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THE SUN NEWS

Too Much Squealing on Pig Stunt

Indignant legislators need to lighten up

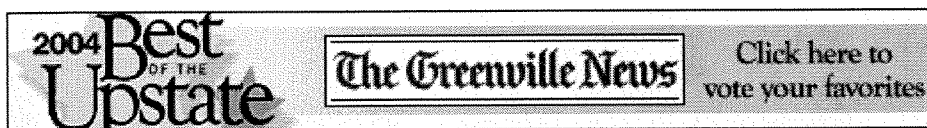
Who knew S.C. legislators were so thin-skinned or that two little pigs could be so offensive?

Gov. Mark Sanford's stunt of carrying the two pigs into the Statehouse last week to illustrate his belief that "pork won and the taxpayers lost" in the state budget has lots of legislators gasping in indignation.

Sanford's prank defiled the people's house, showed no class, took away from the dignity of both the governor's and legislators' office, some said. Others asked: Could the pig episode be the governor's legacy?

The legislators may resent Sanford's skill at creating a photo opportunity, and they may feel that the governor is showboating a bit. But the offended legislators should take a deep breath and relax. They're taking themselves too seriously here.

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Posted Monday, May 31, 2004 - 9:56 pm

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Pledge should aid charter schools.

A bill that will make it easier to establish charter schools in South Carolina comes with an attractive incentive: a \$20 million pledge from a private company in Virginia. Dennis Bakke, president and chief executive of Imagine Schools, has promised the money to South Carolina charter schools in the form of a loan program if lawmakers approve a bill creating a statewide charter school district.

That new district could approve charter schools, bypassing local school districts that may oppose the schools. Imagine Schools operates K-12 public charter and independent schools nationwide in partnership with parents and local school boards.

Charter schools are publicly funded, but they don't have to meet the same rules regarding curriculum and staffing that regular public schools must observe. One strength of charter schools is that they can tailor their curriculums to specific student populations — for instance, college-bound high-achievers, at-risk youth or young people with disabilities. Greenville County will have at least five charter schools this fall. Two new schools are Palmetto Charter School, specializing in students with attention and hyperactivity disorders, and Wohali Academy for emotionally handicapped children.

Other states have been far more aggressive in creating charter schools, although the proposal to create a statewide charter school district could streamline the process. Currently, there are 19 charter schools in the state, but advocates predict the number of charter schools in the state could triple in two years.

Charter schools offer a much-needed measure of competition to traditional public schools. The pledge from Imagine Schools adds greater urgency to streamlining the charter granting process in South Carolina.



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The Greenville News

Budget process needs statewide perspective

Posted Monday, May 31, 2004 - 9:56 pm

By Mark Sanford

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Over the last few days, there has been a well-chronicled fuss over budget vetoes. But the basic question all of us should ask is, why?

At the end of the day, for me it has all been about two principles:

1. In a state that constitutionally requires a balanced budget — and therefore doesn't allow deficit spending — should we immediately pay off an illegal deficit that by law shouldn't exist when we have the means to do so or put other spending ahead of it? And if we don't, what sort of precedent do we set for a legislative body 50 years from now in adhering to the balanced budget requirement our founding fathers put in place?

2. When is enough enough in spending money we don't have? This so-called "Maybank Money" is \$90 million we hope will materialize, but because there are no guarantees, we felt we needed to build in some cushion space if it was going to be paying for core functions of government.

We certainly had other much larger differences. For example, our budget proposed growth in government of 1 percent while this one proposed growing government by 6.6 percent. Our budget incorporated substantial savings from restructuring; this one proposed very little

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Guest column

- **Mark Sanford:** Budget process needs statewide perspective (05/31/04)
- **W. Marcus Newberry Jr.:** Let's take the road less traveled to better health (05/30/04)
- **David Shi:** Flowing waters of Reedy River carry eternal promise of renewal (05/30/04)
- **Randy Kowalski:** Put maximum effort into helping others, living life (05/30/04)
- **State needs jobs, and legal reform** (05/28/04)

More details

Republican Mark Sanford was elected governor in November 2002. He represented South Carolina's 1st Congressional District in Congress from 1995 to 2001.

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restructuring and spends \$315 million more than is projected to come in on a recurring basis — which creates an immediate budget hole next year.

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But politics is about compromise, so in our vetoes, we elected to limit our focus to the two things we thought mattered most. We offered vetoes comprising 1 percent of the entire budget that would have extinguished the remaining unconstitutional \$16 million deficit — and left a \$20 million cushion in the \$90 million of "Maybank Money" — to ensure that agencies like DSS actually receive the funds promised.

We offered 106 vetoes — in essence 106 chances to recognize at least a dollar of waste in a \$5.3 billion budget. The House didn't find a single dollar. So the following day, I carried a couple of pigs upstairs as a lighthearted way of saying, "Wait a minute — there is plenty of money for 'pork' projects for individual members' districts but no way to carve out any savings to pay off the deficit?"

Trying to change anything in the political process means you're going to lose some fights, and we lost on both of these principles. It's time to move on, but the fuss surrounding them raised for many a bigger question — the belief that these overturned vetoes had less to do with the vetoes themselves than with making a statement about who is in charge of the budget process in South Carolina. Clearly, we recognize that to be the General Assembly, but whether or not the executive branch has a hand in the process is important for all of us to think about, because the ultimate measure of any government is what it spends.

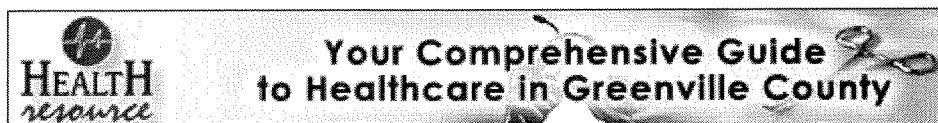
In our state, the Governor's Office has not historically had much involvement in the budget. That's been the Legislature's "sandbox." While the legislative body is for the most part composed of very competent people, each member is elected to represent one district — one part of our state. For more than 200 years, governors didn't even produce an executive budget. Carroll Campbell began the process little over 10 years ago, yet the Governor's Office brings with it a unique statewide perspective that Gov. Campbell believed was key to the budget process.

Regardless of how much a representative loves this state, if elected to represent one district and given the choice between something in that district or something better for the state but 100 miles away — guess which one many believe they are required to pick?

It is precisely for this reason we need the executive branch to nudge and challenge the General Assembly to go just a bit further when dealing with principles as significant as the ones we laid out in our budget vetoes. That's not a crisis — that's not an offense — that's something we should celebrate, and two great things came out of this whole fuss.

One, there were some heroes in both the House and Senate who stood up for these simple ideas, and from little beginnings big things can grow that ultimately begin to change the way things are done in Columbia. If you get the chance, I'd ask you to thank people like Greg Ryberg, Greg Gregory, Harry Stille, Glenn McConnell, Herb Kirsh and Ben Hagood.

Second, sand is always going to fly when you get in someone else's sandbox. For a while, it may get messy, but in the end, you can build a far better sandcastle with two hands rather than one — so it also goes, I think, with South Carolina's budgeting practices. Time will tell. In the meantime, I plan to keep on digging.



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